

PEOPLE & THINGS

By ATTICUS

THE new President of the French Republic who is to be elected this week will be meagrely rewarded for his labours. Compared with his colleague at the White House who receives a personal salary of £33,000 a year, subject to tax, and up to £30,000 for personal expenses, travelling and entertainment, the French President receives £61,000 a year. From this he will need to spend £26,000 for the general upkeep of the Elysée Palace, the salaries of the thirty-seven members of his civil and military staff, and food and wine. Another £15,000 will go on travel, gifts to foreign heads of State and charities. The upkeep of his fleet of motor-cars will cost £16,000. This leaves the President with a personal salary of £4,000 a year on which he must pay income tax at the standard rate. Last year M. Auriol paid £934 in income tax plus £58 9s. tax assessed on the flat he occupies at the Elysée. Yet this year there are believed to be at least fourteen candidates, the biggest field for thirty years, and the election has had to be extended to cover two days—next Thursday and Friday. The chances of the Socialist M. Naegelen, former Governor-General of Algeria, are fancied in some well-informed quarters.

One Man's Holiday

MR. K. N. ENGEL, B.Sc., is the technical manager of Elmst Limited, and is an expert on underwater exploration and diamond drilling. At present he and his research vessel are at work in the Firth of Forth.

This summer he decided to take his family to Brittany and have a busman's holiday learning underwater spear-fishing. He was fortunate in falling in with a group of young French enthusiasts who were shooting soles and plaice. One day one young expert shot a 20 lb. ray through the backbone, killing it instantly. It was as big as an office desk. He brought it ashore and immediately looked to see if there was a sting at the tip of the tail, but there wasn't. He heaved it over on its back and in doing so the tail gave a last reflex twitch, the underside of it just grazing his leg.

In the Midst of Life . . .

ENGEL heard a roar like a wounded bull. He ran over and found the Frenchman writhing on the ground, almost speechless with pain. With presence of mind Engel put his lips to the small wound and sucked vigorously to try to extract the poison. Already the leg was twice its normal size. Engel thought the man was going to die. He forced him to his feet and somehow manhandled him across the sand to their car and got him to the nearest doctor in a tiny Brittany village. He says he has never seen such efficiency. The doctor took one look at the man, gave him a heart stimulant and a shot of morphine and in twenty minutes he was being operated on in the hospital at Douarnenez. He was able to walk again in three days.

Engel says the sting was underneath the tail. It looked, he says, rather like a white Parker fountain pen. It was loaded not with poison but with a very powerful alkali.

"Nothing else extraordinary happened on my holiday," says Mr. Engel. "I was very bad at hitting fish and my only triumph came when I stalked a cormorant for an hour and finally swam under water and shot it from below."

Don't Know

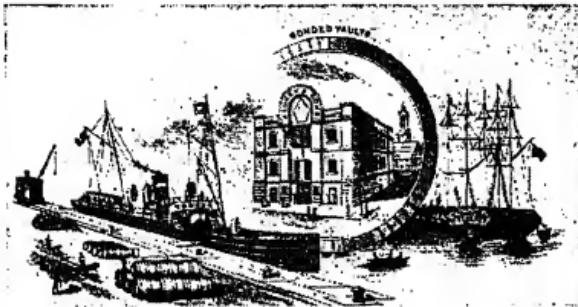
DEPRESSING evidence of our insularity emerges from a survey, "The Flow of the News," just published by the thoroughly responsible International Press Institute. Sixty per cent of British newspaper readers are unfamiliar with any aspect of the work of the United Nations. Forty-nine per cent cannot name any Soviet satellite. Seventy-six per cent don't know who Mr. Dulles is. (Only fifty-four per cent of Americans don't know who Mr. Eden is.) Eighty-two per cent don't know what N.A.T.O. stands for.

When the British were asked why they did not devote more

attention to foreign affairs, thirty-eight per cent said they had no time; twenty-eight per cent said they were not interested and two per cent said "it's depressing." (Our showing on domestic news was relatively better. Only twenty-nine per cent did not know who Mr. R. A. Butler is—compared with eighty-five per cent in France and ninety-four per cent in Italy.) Yet we have by far the largest newspaper circulation in the world—596 newspapers per 1,000 inhabitants. But then the Institute does not define what it means by a "newspaper."

of simpler golf. Surely with the introduction from America of half-grades for club-heads the golfers of England will at last revolt. ("My 3, please, caddie." "Can I get there with my 6?" "Better take the 7, sir.") Anyway I hope so, and here is a report straight from the barricades.

The Golf Match Club is very exclusive. It was founded in 1896 and its members include some of the leading amateurs in England as well as plenty of ten-handicap players. In the winter they have a dinner every month at which singles and foursomes are arranged, always level, and bets



A DOVER WINE MERCHANT

I think John Lukey & Sons of Dover do well to retain this beautifully engraved Victorian vignette on their letter-heading and to eschew the dreary typeset or die-stamped heading of these less spacious times. It would be interesting to learn if even more resplendent examples are still used by firms or private individuals.

Strange Lullaby

CHRONIC insomnia must be such a terrible affliction that it seems worth while recording an extraordinary cure which was successful in the case of Dr. Quintard Taylor, a prominent American heart specialist who died a few years ago. Dr. Taylor built himself a soundproof bedroom and recorded his own yawns so that they would run for an hour on a wire-recorder. Then he retired to bed and switched on the machine and before long he was asleep. I see no reason to doubt the power of auto-hypnosis and the facts are as given to me the other day by Dr. Taylor's daughter.

The Farouk Sale

INVISIBLE exports, those spectral assets in which England appears to be so rich, are not easily defined, but I suppose a good example can be found in our export of auctioneering services. Despite the uneasy state of Anglo-Egyptian relations Messrs. Sotheby will be handling the coins, objets de vertu, jewellery and silver at the Farouk sale in February and Messrs. Harmer will be selling the stamps, with the result that a majestic commission in foreign currency will

return to these shores, accompanied by great prestige. For the benefit of schoolboys of all ages I reproduce here the rarest stamp in Prince Farouk's collection, which is the British Guiana 1851 two cents on rose paper. Only ten of these uninspiring stamps exist and two of them are in the British Royal Collection. This specimen is expected to fetch £1,000.

Appointment in Samarra?

I AM not particularly saddened by the sacking of Prince Farouk's toy cupboard. His efforts to keep history at bay had neither the dignity nor the panache that people expect of kings. This summer, a friend of mine asked him where he intended to live. "In the corner of the world that is safest from Communism," he replied. "Watch the papers and when you see in which country I have settled, follow me there and then you too will be safe." Which country will he choose? Will he be keeping an appointment in Samarra?

Back to Golf

IN support of my colleague Henry Longhurst and of that splendid stormy petrel of the links "Bob" Harris, I range myself on the side

are laid upon these matches. Not long ago, two ten-handicap members decided to have a one-club match at Sandwich. They both chose a No. 5 and when the day came they strolled out to the first tee with a couple of balls in their pockets. The sun shone and the larks sang. There was no paraphernalia, no worry about which club to use, and they got along at a good pace using the unended maces as walking-sticks. They finished in two and a half hours. They halved the match on the last green and against a bogey 76 (there is no par at St. George's) they both scored under 90. They agreed it was one of the pleasantest rounds they had ever played.

A Concrete Suggestion

IF Sir John Nott-Bower wishes to reduce the deficiency of 4,000 men in the police force in the Metropolitan area, he can forthwith make a saving of two.

Nearly every day for the past five years two uniformed policemen have been employed "trapping" at the intersection where Grenville Street runs across Bernard Street into Lansdowne Terrace, W.C.1, anyone who does not stop at the "major road" sign in Grenville Street. This is a very bad crossing between what are in effect two major roads and the policemen use Red Indian skill in concealing themselves behind lamp-posts and in the shadow of buildings. There are daily convictions for failing to observe the halt sign at this intersection.

These policemen could be employed catching burglars if the Ministry of Transport would invent a distinctive road sign to mark danger spots. A black skull and crossbones on a white background is met with in some countries and might usefully be employed here at lethal crossings where "Major Road Ahead" is a dangerous understatement.

(This is known as a "concrete suggestion." Whenever Sir Winston Churchill sees this cliché he crosses out "concrete" and writes in "cement".)

Memo to Smith's

MESSRS. LIPPINCOTT, the distinguished American publishers and booksellers display the following advertisement:

"Ladies and gentlemen, these things are books. They keep quiet. They do not suddenly dissolve into wavy lines or snowstorm effects. They do not pause to deliver a message from their sponsors. And every one of them is three-dimensional: they have length, breadth and thickness for convenience in handling, and they live indefinitely in the fourth dimension of time."